



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

**CONTACT:** Mel Walters

Montana Main Street Coordinator  
406-841-2756

Marissa Kozel  
Montana Department of Commerce  
406-841-2772

## **The Montana Department of Commerce Announces Montana Main Street Affiliate Program**

(HELENA) – Today the Montana Department of Commerce unveiled the Montana Main Street Affiliate Program, as a new resource to smaller, rural communities. The program is an off-shoot of the successful community revitalization program called Montana Main Street.

“This new Affiliate Program will be an extraordinary tool for Montana’s rural communities,” said Governor Brian Schweitzer. “Many of our small towns are searching for ways to rejuvenate their downtown areas. This program will bring the community back to the heart of Main Street.”

The Main Street Affiliate Program is specifically designed for small, rural communities exploring downtown revitalization. Many of these communities cannot meet the requirements for full Main Street designation. The Affiliate Program creates new requirements, making downtown development, training and education available to a larger number of Montana communities. The Program was developed by Department of Commerce, and has no connection to the National Main Street Program.

“The Department of Commerce is very excited about the potential of this Affiliate Program,” said Commerce Director Anthony Preite. “We recognized the needs of our smallest communities, and modeled our program after a proven method of success.”

Communities with a population of 2,000 or less are targeted for the program. An affiliate community, no matter its size, is still eligible to apply as a fully designated Montana Main Street community.

The Montana Main Street Program will continue to work extensively with its designated Montana Main Street Communities, while providing selected services, to the Affiliate Programs.

**Services to Affiliate Programs through Main Street Program:**

- Main Street 101 Training
- Registration Scholarship (funds permitting) to the Annual National Main Streets Conference
- Providing of a basic Main Street Library
- Telephone and email consultation with the Montana Main Street staff
- A one-day visit (minimum) from the Montana Main Street staff per annum
- An annual progress assessment on the anniversary of Affiliate selection

**Commitment from Community:**

- Display a focus on the downtown commercial area
- Follow, to the maximum extent possible, the Main Street Approach to downtown revitalization
- Actively participate in Montana Main Street activities
- Become a member of the National Main Street Network
- Report economic development statistics
- Show a minimum budget of \$2,500 (NMSC Membership, travel, etc.)

**How to Apply:** Complete a Montana Main Street Affiliate Application.

**Application Available:** February 1, 2007

**Application Due Date:** March 30, 2007

**Application Available:** Montana Department of Commerce  
Montana Main Street Program  
Small Business Development Center  
301 S. Park Ave., P.O. Box 200506  
Helena, MT 59620-0505  
or  
406-841-2756  
or  
[mwalters@mt.gov](mailto:mwalters@mt.gov)

###